

only, but after the 24th they will be open to public inspection.

We hope to see the sculptor's art called into requisition more often for a similar purpose than it has hitherto been in England. We have grand deeds to illustrate, and great men to honour,—men who should be "chained to the chariot of triumphal art," and made to serve as an incentive to future generations. A poet has sung—

"These are the gifts of art, and arts strives most
Where commerce has enriched the busy coast.
He catches all improvements in his flight,
Spreads foreign wonders in his country's sight,
Improves what others have invented well,
And sure has own to match them or excel,
'Tis thus regenerating each with each,
Alternately the nations learn and teach."

But England as yet scarcely bears him out.

A conversation was given at the North London Artisan School on the 10th inst., which was fully attended. The sketches and drawings exhibited were numerous and good. Mr. Bailey, the sculptor, sent two or three choice specimens from his studio; Alderman Copeland fitted up three shelves, with a display of works in glass, porcelain, and china; and the School of Design lent some drawings. Free admission was given to the students of the school, and those of the school of design, who availed themselves of it freely. At the conclusion of the evening, Mr. S. C. Hall purchased a small study, and the artist (Mr. Buss) who was there, immediately (very much to his credit) presented the proceeds (5*l.* 5*s.*) to the school.*

From art to an artist: some time since, when describing the new Olympic Theatre, Wych-street, then just completed, we mentioned that Mr. Aglio, by whom the decorations were executed, had suffered paralysis. From that time to this he has not recovered: his right side is wholly useless, and he is unable to make those efforts on which his subsistence depends. We found him the other day laboriously striving to complete the third of a series of pictures which he has, painfully, executed with the left hand. We sincerely wish that these few lines may lead some who are able to interest themselves in his behalf, and secure him a retreat for the rest of his days.

We cannot too often impress on artists and others the importance of making a provision when young against the contingencies of fortune.—The proposed Provident and Friendly Society for Building and Engineering Workmen is now in shape: its principles of action are settled, and more than 1,000*l.* has been subscribed. We shall take an early opportunity to bring it fully before the public.—And this leads us (and with this we shall conclude our present chapter) to ask the attention of our readers to the announcement in our advertising columns of the annual ball to be given in aid of "The Builders' Benevolent Institution." Last year it realised a considerable sum for the Institution, and was in all respects so well conducted as to lead us to claim for it the support of the charitable and right minded. The Institution is not now merely an idea, it is a fact. The doubt as to its practicability is past: it is already doing its work, and we hope to see many, who have hitherto hung back, take this opportunity of giving it their earnest aid.

THE COMMERCIAL DOCKS.—Applications are to be made in the ensuing session for the improvement of these docks. It is proposed to enlarge the East Country Dock, and to carry a tramway from the docks generally to join the branch railway at Deptford.

* This school will do much good, and eminently deserves the support of the public.

WHAT WILL IT COST?

THE question, "What will it cost?" was selected as the title of this paper in order briefly to indicate the scope of the following remarks, which are entirely of a practical nature.

What will it cost? A weighty question this, which ought to be gravely put, in regard to every object that can excite the ambition or vanity of the human mind. A wide field of inquiry is thus opened up doubtless, but I shall follow it only so far as applicable to architectural design, in regard to which all must admit its importance. Indeed, it is in accordance with the daily experience of the architect that when a new work is proposed to be confided to his care, the first question generally put is, "What will it cost?"

Now, admitting to the fullest extent the propriety of ascertaining with all possible accuracy the ultimate cost of any work before commencing operations, it seems deserving of inquiry what the effect upon art is of thus giving to such considerations a place of the first importance.

In every architectural work—no matter of what extent—whether a cottage or a palace—the first and all-important question is, What do the circumstances of the case in hand require? Determine this question, and having done so, then follows, in its natural course, that as to cost. Even in cases where, of necessity, the question as to cost must be strictly kept in view, mere cheapness ought never, for a permanent building, to be the sole aim. There are considerations of higher interest, which, in no circumstances, ought to be overlooked—not even in the erection of the humblest cottage—not to speak of public buildings. For it must ever be kept in mind that the works of the architect differ from those of all other artists, inasmuch as they bulk largely on the eye of the public, and cannot be hid. Unlike the productions of the poet or the painter, they cannot be laid aside when their brief hour of popularity has passed away. On the contrary, they are prominent and enduring structures, generally of such magnitude as to add new features to the aspect of the country. The architectural monuments of successive ages, therefore, serve as landmarks, indicating to future historians the progressive stages of advancing refinement. In this view, architecture becomes the exponent of the civilisation and habits of a people: it is read and known of all men, and ever obtrudes its emphatic testimony on the most transient passerby. Its records have been preserved when every other record of the people who owned it has perished in the abyss of remote antiquity. And even where Tradition herself had become silent, the works of the architect in the infancy of the world have, by the perseverance of a Layard, been disclosed to view. The gorgeous halls and stately palaces of ancient Nineveh proclaim, as with the thrilling voice of one raised from the dead, the vast resources of that mighty empire, and the pomp and glory of her potentates, who thus seem restored back again to the world after ages of oblivion. Such is the high position which architecture assumes—such are the responsible duties which the architect is called on to perform. He becomes the historian of his country's civilisation, and his works are written as with an iron pen on tables of stone. He can, therefore, no more perform these duties lightly, or with a sinister motive, than can the military engineer, to whom are intrusted the outworks for the defence of his country: he cannot, in order to please the taste of his employer, do what he, after mature deliberation, believes to be a violation of good taste, any more than can the physician alter his prescription to please the palate of his patient.

If such be a true representation of the views which ought to guide the architect in the performance of his duties, it will not be difficult to determine the position in the consideration of any contemplated work which ought to be assigned to the question—What will it cost?

Thus to preface all our inquiries, and to make the question of cost paramount to every other consideration, is to lay an instant arrest on design. The architect, thus fettered, is precluded from all sympathy with the good and the true—the only source of the beautiful. The imagination must be schooled down to the views of the utilitarian, who values everything

by a money standard; and thus images of nothing but what is cheap present themselves—ever meagre and starved in their forms. All aspirations after those forms of beauty which art can supply are quenched. The imagination, thus enthralled, refuses her office, and the advancement of art becomes impossible: its very existence is altogether perilled. The architect, thus trammelled, must be content to descend from the high platform of his profession, and occupy the more humble position of the handicraftsman. The effect of this system, so injurious to the mind of the designer, is alike fatal to the result of his labours. A building reared under such circumstances for ever afterwards betrays its sordid origin in the meanness of its features, and the leanness of its forms, which, in spite of all future efforts, can rarely be effaced. Nothing short of the direct urgency should induce the architect to give way to the system—nothing short of physical necessity can excuse it. Begun with the one object of economy alone before the mind, the meagre starved design, in the course of being developed, seldom comes up to the expectation of its proprietor; and, during its progress, is not unfrequently made to undergo a variety of transmutations, in the vain hope of rendering its ungainly aspect somewhat more attractive. The result in most such cases is, that the cost in the end is greater than if a proper system had been at first adopted. The unhappy architect loses his credit, and the disappointed proprietor loses his money, without attaining his object. It were easy to illustrate these remarks, by reference to examples around us, and these not everyday works, but such as are of considerable pretension to architectural effect, occupying a prominent position, and bulking largely on the public eye.

But without referring to recent works, the parish churches of the last century may be safely quoted as illustrating the miserable result of giving pre-eminence to the question of cost. What huge monstrosities do we see scattered all over the country. How often do we find some miserable fabric, stamped in its every feature with sordid parsimony, marring one of Nature's loveliest landscapes, in which she has scattered her richest stores in boundless profusion. And how sadly do these contrast with the parish churches of England of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, or with those of the same period still existing in our own country, so beautiful even though in ruins, and adding fresh charms to the fairest scenes. These fine fragments of bygone ages have done more to revive the dark superstitions of their times than the world care to admit. But why should good taste, or a true and noble architecture, be confined to the unreformed creed of the middle ages? Let heritors and proprietors abandon the miserable system of starved economy, and follow the more generous system of bygone times, already so auspiciously revived in various quarters. The banking establishments of our cities, and other public institutions, have shown in their recent architectural works a fine example of wise and judicious liberality, which, it is to be hoped, will not be lost sight of by other public bodies throughout the country, so that the question, what will it cost? will no longer be allowed to lord it over every other consideration.

Are considerations of expense, then, to be entirely overlooked or set aside? By no means. No man beginneth to build a tower without first counting the cost. But surely he must previously, and first of all, endeavour to form a clear idea of what the tower ought to be, and of what the circumstances require at his hands.

The peculiarities of the site, or of the neighbourhood, will all be considered by the judicious architect. He will endeavour to work out his design in accordance with these, having a truthful regard to the circumstances of the case, and an enlightened view to the ultimate good of the whole. Having thus endeavoured to form a clear idea of the extent and character of the proposed work, he will, while attempting to realise it, and give it form, employ all the artistic skill at his command. In this way the mind is left unfettered, and free to choose from amidst all the forms of beauty which fancy can disclose. And it is only by following such a course that architecture can be